



**For Immediate Release**

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**Agreement Paves Way for Viaduct Solution**

SEATTLE – Gov. Chris Gregoire, King County Executive Ron Sims and Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels today announced a major step forward in replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct along Seattle's central waterfront.

The three-government agreement announced today lays the foundation for choosing an option for the viaduct's central portion by the end of next year and builds on the work under way on the south and north portion of the State Route 99 corridor.

The agreement directs the three transportation departments -- the Washington State Department of Transportation, King County and Seattle Department of Transportation -- to consider the entire system of streets, transit service, and freeways from Lake Washington to Elliott Bay, and from Northeast 85<sup>th</sup> Street to South Spokane Street in evaluating solutions that keep people, goods and services moving.

"The Alaskan Way Viaduct needs to be taken down on Seattle's central waterfront for safety's sake," Gregoire said. "The question we need to answer is how we move people and goods to keep this region thriving in the long run when we no longer have the viaduct."

This work builds on the agreement made last March to replace about half of the viaduct in the north and south ends by 2012. The first project to strengthen several columns between Columbia Street and Yesler Way in downtown Seattle began in October. The second project relocates electrical utilities under the viaduct in 2008 so the south section from King Street to South Spokane Street can be replaced.

"We have an opportunity to build a transportation solution that works today and for decades to come," Nickels said. "We can find a way forward that keeps people and goods moving efficiently through our city while protecting our environment and creating a waterfront that everyone can enjoy."

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An advisory committee of local community and business representatives has been appointed to provide feedback on potential solutions and provide input to help officials develop a final recommendation. Gregoire, Sims and Nickels will also appoint an independent project manager to help identify and evaluate solutions.

“Citizen input will be crucial to help us find a solution that reflects the region’s community values, including environmental stewardship,” Sims said. “We will all benefit from a deliberate, independent, and transparent process.”

All replacement solutions will be evaluated on how they would address:

- Ensuring public safety;
- Moving people and goods;
- Ensuring fiscal responsibility;
- Increasing use of Seattle’s waterfront; and
- Protecting the environment.

Solutions under consideration may include transit investments, capital investments that increase reliability for freight and vehicles, and incentives for drivers to use alternate modes of transportation.

The guiding principles and names of advisory committee members can be found at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/viaduct).

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